

A Complaint
OF THE
OPPRESSED
AGAINST
OPPRESSORS.
OR, THE

Unjust and Arbitrary PROCEEDINGS of
some Souldjers and Justices, against some Sober Godly
Persons, in and near *London*; who now lye in stinking
Goals for the Testimony of a good Conscience.

With
Some REASONS why they cannot *Swear Allegiance*, to obtain
their *Liberty*.

Faithfully Collected by *JOHN LOVEWEL*, A constant Ob-
server of their *Patience in Suffering*, and of the *Injustice*
of their *Persecutors*.

Zeph. 3. 1. Wo to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing City.
*Iia. 33. 1. Wo to thee that spoilest, and wast not spoiled; and dealest trea-
cherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee: when thou shalt
cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled, and when thou shalt make an end to
deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.*

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A COMPLAINT

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OPPRESSORS.

THe Unjust proceedings of some in present power, against many in this Nation, fearing God, cannot but be manifest to such sober men, that do or will take a view of the same. I having knowledge of the Sufferings of many Godly Persons, especially in and about *London*, whom their very adversaries cannot blemish justly with the least spot of Infamy, dare not but let the World know the Innocency of the men, and the Tyranny of their Oppressors : And in what I shall say, I dare appeal to the Consciences of all sober & judicious persons of what Perswasion soever, except the proud Prelate ; Whether it be not Tyranny to the height, for men to be seized and taken out of their Beds at midnight by Souldiers, in a Hostile manner, with their Swords drawn, by means of which, their Wives and Children have been much affrighted, to their great detriment in point of health ; and this done in a time of Peace, and without Warrant from any, no not so much as a Warrant from a Justice of the Peace. Others, taken from their peaceable Meetings, when they have been in the Lords service in a publick manner, the doors being open for all that would, to see what they did, and hear what they said. Others, attached as they have passed along the streets about their lawful Employments ; and all this done by Souldiers without Warrant from any, and by them,

carried before some men called Justices, but such only in Name and Title, nothing so in truth. For *They afflict the just, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right*, Amos 5. 12. But leaving them a while, Reader take notice, that these Souldiers, to wit, one Liuetenant *Wilton*, a man very well known where he lives, (but not for any vertue he hath) and Ensigne *Spike* a man so well educated, that he scarce knows what Law or Religion is, and as to the business of a Souldier he is also a stranger, as I in charity judge of him : For these men, with the assistance of Serjeants and Souldiers, like themselves, have contracted that guilt upon themselves, that had they known Law, been Religious, or Souldiers, they would have scorned to have defiled themselves, so much as with a touch with a finger. But their actions have been such as above said, and how contrary to *Magna Charta*, and the fundamental Laws of the Nation, I leave to the Judicious ; and how liable they are to be punished by Law for their so doing, will appear as followeth.

Magna Charta, Cap. 29. Anno 9. Hen. 3. saith, *No free man shall be taken or imprisoned, or be disseized of his Free-hold, or Liberties, or free Customs, or be Out-lawed, or Exiled, or any ways Destroyed ; nor we shall not pass upon him, nor deal with him, but by the lawful judgement of his Peers, or by the Law of the Land ; We shall not sell to any man, we shall not deny nor deferre any man Right or Justice.* Againe, *No man of what estate or condition that he be, shall be put from his Land or Tenement, or taken, imprisoned, or dis-inherited, or put to death, without being brought in to answer by due process of Law.* Anno 28. Ed. 3. Cap. 3. Thus he that hath but little sight, may see how contrary to the good and wholesome Laws of the Nation these men have acted, and how dishonourable it is to the King and his Government, for such wicked Fellows to be suffered in such arbitrary and villanous proceedings against sober men, as they have from time to time practised. For if no man, of what estate or condition soever, shall be taken or Imprisoned without a due process of the Law ; then to seize any man without Warrant from some Minister of Justice, is to take and Imprison him at the Wills and Lusts of these base and inferior fellows,

lowes, who matter not the Honour of the King, the Violating of Law, nor the Liberty of the Subject; then will not these things cry loud to Heaven for Vengeance? Besides these mercenary fellows, cannot excuse themselves by pleading ignorance, for the King by open Proclamation, hath strictly charged and commanded all Officers and Souldiers, and all other persons whatsoever, that they shall not molest nor trouble any of his good Subjects, without Warrant or lawful Authority; as appears by his Proclamation, Intituled, *A Proclamation prohibiting the Seizing of any persons, or Searching Houses, without Warrant, except in time of actual Insurrection*: Bearing date the seventeenth of January, one thousand six hundred and sixty. The which Proclamation (so much of it as is to our business in hand) I shall here insert, for the better satisfaction of the Reader, as followeth.

And we being given to understand, that during these late Com-motions, several persons have been imprisoned by Souldiers and others, their Houses Searched, and their goods taken away, without law-ful Authority, and that thereupon opprobrious words, and terms of dis-cension, and discrimination of parties, have been used and given to Our great dis-service, contrary to the before said Act of Pardon and Oblivion; and notwithstanding Our Royal pleasure, so often published and declared to the contrary.

*These are therefore strictly to charge and command all Officers and Souldiers, and all other Persons whatsoever (unlesse it be upon inevitable necessity of suddain and actual Rebellion and Insurrec-tion) to forbear to molest or trouble any of our good Subjects, either in their Persons or Estates, and not to presume to Apprehend or Secure any Person or Persons, or Seize any Armes whatsoever, or to search any Houses, without a lawful Warrant under the Hand and Seal of some one or more of the Lords of our Privy Council, or under the Hand and Seal of some one or more of the Lords Lieutenants, De-puty Lieutenants, or Justices of the Peace, in their respective Li-berties, and Precincts, within the several Counties, Cities, and Towns Corporate, in our Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick upon Tweed. And we will that the said Warrants be alwaies directed to some Constable or other known legal Officer, and that no Souldier do otherwise interpose or meddle with
the*

the Execution of the said Warrants, then by aiding and assisting of the said Constable, or other such known legal Officer, or Officers as aforesaid: and all Military Officers and Souldiers, are hereby commanded to be aiding and assisting to such Constable, or other legal Officers, being by them or any of them thereunto required: And We do hereby declare, that as well all those who shall hereafter be so hardy, as to offend against this Our Proclamation, shall not onely not receive Countenance from Us therein, but shall be left to be proceeded against according to Our Laws, and incurre Our high displeasure, as persons doing their utmost to bring Scandal and Contempt upon Our Government.

In all which, there are these things Considerable.

First, That the King was very sensible of the great abuses done to many by the illegal and lawless proceedings of Souldiers at that time, and the great dis-service they did him in it.

Secondly, The King from the aforesaid sence, gives a strict Charge and Command to all Officers and Souldiers, and all other Persons, that they presume not to Seize the person or persons of any, &c. without Warrant under the Hand and Seals of such mentioned in the Proclamation.

Thirdly, That no Officer or Souldier is to meddle or interpose in the Execution of such Warrant, if granted against any, except called by a Constable or other legal Officers, to their assistance in serving the same.

Fourthly, That the King will be so far from countenancing any that shall be so hardy as to offend against this his Proclamation, that they shall be left to be proceeded against according to Law.

Fifthly, Such persons so offending, shall incurre his high displeasure, as persons doing their uttermost to bring Scandal and Contempt upon his Government.

And yet these abovenamed men, would be thought to be high promoters of the Kings Honour and Government, when their actions (so declared to be by the King himself in his Proclamation) have been high and bold attempts made against, and Scandal to his Government.

It is true, if drinking his Health in Bowles of Ale and Beer, and Glasses of Sack, till they become brutish, Swearing and Blas-

Blaspheming the holy Name of God, and such like Debauchery, will Honour the King and make his Government as famous as *Solomon* was, then they are the men that will do it. If their breaking his Laws, and abusing the good People of the Land, as abovesaid, will Honour him, they will do it : Such, as I take it, being all the Love to, or Valour they can shew for him or his Interest. But not to enlarge, I will now return to speak of what Dealing these sober men have found from the hands of these Justices. The Souldiers they seize contrary to Law, as you have heard, and away they carry them ; it may be to *John Robinson*, Lieutenant of the Tower, or *Thomas Bide* Ale-Brewer in *Shoreditch*, or some other man called a Justice, as the Souldiers please : And when they are before them, though no matter of Fact be laid to their charge ; none accusing them to their faces of the breach of any known Law ; Seeing they cannot find any thing against them worthy of Bonds, they presently come to this point ; *Will you take the Oath of Allegiance* ; If any refuse, they send him away to Goal, pretending great matters against them, which they insert in their Mittimus in general, as dangerous persons, Plotting, speaking Treason, and the like : Which he that knows any thing in Law, knows that a general Charge is no Charge ; the Law requiring, *That no free born English-man be kept in durance without some particular Charge be expressed in the Warrant, by which he is committed and held*. By which it is manifest, that these Justices have as little regard to the Honour of the King, as the Souldiers ; For where-as by Law, they ought to rebuke and punish those Souldiers, that so illegally seize the persons of these civil men, they justify their unwarrantable doings, and in stead thereof commit the poor men to prison, contrary to Law also ; making no matter of such arbitrary actions, but willingly swallow them. And further it is evident, That no one Justice hath power to minister the Oath to any, though some of them will not stick to do it (for I my self was in place, when *Thomas Bide* ministred the Oath to two persons, and never a Justice there but himself, making them manifestly forswear themselves) contrary to the expresse letter of the Law, which enables no one Justice to require any person to take the Oath, much lesse to minister it

to any : For saith the Statute, Intituled, *An Act for administering the Oath of Allegiance*, the seventh Year of King James, *That it shall and may be lawful, &c. And for any two Justices of the Peace, within any County, City or Towne Corporate, whereof one to be of the Quorum, to require any person or persons, of the age of eighteen years or above, under the degree of a Baron or Baroness, to take the said Oath.* By which it is manifest, that no one Justice hath power to tender the Oath to any : And if it be no tender in Law, it is no denial in Law, though the Prisoner do refuse to take it. For if one Justice will be so hardy as to require any to take the Oath contrary to Law, yet none that are conscientious dare to be so wicked, as to take it from him whom the Law doth not intitle and impower to minister the same, unlesse he will forswear himself ; for he that taketh the Oath, must swear amongst other things, that it is lawfully ministered to him, as appears in these expresse words mentioned in the Oath itself, *Which I acknowledge by good and full Authority to be lawfully ministered unto me, &c.* When one Justice by himself hath no more authority than hath a Collier ; and yet notwithstanding some have been committed two or three times within this twelve moneths, for refusing (as they call it) to take the Oath, when they were never required to take it by any lawful Authority. And at this day, several lie in Goal, and have done some moneths, whose persons were seized contrary to *Magna Charta*, and the Kings Proclamation, as above-said, for refusing the Oath, as they are not ashamed to say, and to charge them with in their Mittimus, when they never at any time of their commitment, were required to take it according to their own Law, which they make no conscience to break, though they cry out against others so much for the breach of. And further, though they say they are Christians, the very Heathens may rise up in judgement against them ; For they would suffer *Paul* to speak for himself in his own defence, *Acts 21. 39, 40. Chap. 24. 10.* But these men that say they are Christians and Ministers of Justice, will not suffer any of these sober men they thus persecute, to speak for themselves, not so much, hardly, as to give a reason why they cannot Swear.

Nay,

Nay; when in time of Sessions they are called before their Tribunal, where though they desire and intreat them to let them know what they had been kept in Prison for, or what they or any other had against them; they, nor no man else can charge them with ought that they had done against the Law; which being so, they might hope to be heard; and those Abuses redressed; but there they can as little be heard also, nor no notice taken by the Bench of the Illegal proceedings of those men called Justices; but in stead of *Judgement behold Oppression*, and in the place of *Righteousnesse behold a Cry*, Isa. 5. 7. For when at the time of the Goal Delivery (as they call it) they ought by Law, and according to their Oathes, do right impartially to all free born *English-men*, that is, let every one speak freely for himself, in the face of the Countrey, that all may know his Guilt, if Guilty, or his Innocency if Innocent; and if nothing be found against them, by such proof or sufficient witness as the Law requires in such cases; they are sworn to deliver them, and to do them right answerable to the wrongs they have sustained by those Mercenary Souldiers, that seize them contrary to Law and the Kings Proclamation, and those unjust men, called Justices, for their false Imprisoning them; or at least to leave both Souldiers and Justices open to the Law; which could honest men have the benefit of, against these Tyrants, it would sufficiently reparaire them. And further, let them not think, to excuse themselves by tending the Oath of Obedience to them, against whom they can charge no matter of Fact: for it is neither Reason, Law nor Equity, that men should lie in Prison several moneths, as many have done in *New-gate*, and elsewhere, and no Crime committed by them, nor none accusing them of any; that they should then have the Oath tendred to ensnare them, and hold them fast. For if it be a fault in Law to refuse the Oath, when tendred in Court, the fault was but then contracted; all the former Imprisonment, by their own proceedings appears to be manifestly false. And this is all the Justice they can have, *Will you Swear, if you will not, you shall lie in Prison still.* Thus is *Judgement turned away backwards, and Justice standeth as farre off: For Truth is fallen in the Streets, and Equity cannot enter: Tea*

Truth faileth, and he that departeth from Iniquity, maketh himself a prey ; (or as it may be read, is accounted Mad, or a Phanatick) and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him, that there was no Judgement, Isa. 59. 14, 15.

The Lord God without doubt sits in Heaven and seeth their proceedings, who saith to them, *How long will ye Judge unjustly, and accept the Persons of the wicked : Defend the poor and fatherless, do Justice to the afflicted and needy, deliver the poor and needy, rid them out of the hands of the wicked,* Psal. 82. 2, 3, 4. But surely, they have not God in all their thoughts. For it may be said of such, as the Lord said by the Prophet Amos, *They turn Judgement to Wormwood, and leave off Righteousness in the Earth,* Amos 5. 7. And again, *For behold the Lord commandeth, and he will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts ; Shall Horses run upon the Rock ? will one plow there with Oxen ? for ye have turned Judgement into Gall, and the fruit of Righteousness into Hemlock,* Amos 6. 11, 12. And although they may say, in their hearts, *The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil,* Zeph. 1. 12. Yet let them know, he that sits in Heaven shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision ; he shall speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure, Psal. 2. 4, 5. Therefore, *Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed, to turn aside the needy from Judgement, and to take away the right from the poor of my people,* Isa. 10. 1, 2. Little do these unjust men know, who thus pervert the Law, what woes and judgements hang over their heads, for their cruelty to the Lords People. The Word of the Lord shall surely be performed, and though he suffer the wicked for a time to afflict his People, yet, *The Rod of the Wicked shall not rest upon the Lot of the Righteous,* Psal. 125. 3. And though for a time, the wicked may spring as grass, and all the workers of iniquity do flourish, (and tread upon the necks of the godly) it is that they should be destroyed, Psal. 92. 7. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and it shall certainly come to passe : For saith the Lord, *I will undoe all that afflict thee, and I will save her that hateth, and gather her that was driven out ; and I will get them praise and fame in every Land, where they have been put to shame,* Zeph. 3. 19.

Oh that these men that persecute the Lords people would break off their sins of Tyranny, Oppression, and Injustice, before the Decree be gone forth against them, by righteousness.

Thus having given an account to the World, of the unjust and Tyrannical proceedings against the peaceable of the Land; I shall now give (because they are not suffered to speak for themselves) the Reasons why they cannot take the Oath of Obedience, as I have collected from them in my frequent conversation with them. For the refusing of which (as their Enemies, who are their Judges say) they lie in stinking Goals, deprived of the comfortable society of their dear Relations, which God and Nature alloweth them; and made thereby incapable of making such good provision for them, as their necessities call for; *Choosing rather, with Moses, to suffer affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better and more enduring substance.*

The Reasons are as followeth.

First, Because it is a Promisary Oath. Now Oathes of such a kind are forbidden by Christ, *the Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, Rev. 1. 5. Who onely is head of the Church, the great and onely Law-giver, *Isa.* 33. 22. *James* 4. 12. That it is an Oath of such a kind, is manifest to all that read it. That such Oathes are forbidden by Christ, see *Mat.* 5. 34. *But I say unto you, Swear not at all, &c.* From which place I know that many say, *That Christ forbids Swearing vainly, and Swearing by Creatures,* and the like, and doth not forbid Swearing of any kind, provided it be by the Lord, and solemnly done.

That Christ forbids in that place vain Swearing in common talk, or communication, and Sweating by Creatures though never so solemnly performed, is true: But that this is not all that is forbidden is as true: For Christ forbids some kind of Swearing that was in the time of *Moses* approved, as appears in the 33. vers. *Ye have heard, that it hath been said to them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oathes.* Which was no gloss, as some would have

it, but by the Lord required, that if a man Swore an Oath, or Vowed a Vow, unto which he was not bound by any Law of God to do, but was at Liberty in; whether they would or would not Swear, yet having sworn, the Lord requires he should perform his Oath, by which he hath bound his Soul.

Num. 30. 2. If a man Vow a Vow unto the Lord, or Swear an Oath to bind his Soul with a bond, he shall not break (or profane) his Word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

Now saith Christ, *it was said, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oathes; but I say, Swear not at all:* As much as if Christ should say, though it was your Liberty, and no Sin, to promise and bind your Soul to the performance of something or other, you swear to do, provided you break not your word; yet henceforth, I say, that am the Son, and impowred by my Father, now to be the Law-giver; that upon no such account, or in such a kind you Swear, by which you bind your Souls by promise to perform this or that. But in such cases, *let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay Nay.* Thus its evident, that Christ forbids such kind of Swearing as was allowed by *Moses* in Old Times, *viz.* Voluntary, Promisary Swearing, and not vain Swearing only, in common talk, nor Swearing by Creatures; both which were forbidden by them of Old Time, as also false Swearing: For the which there might be a Cloud of Witnesses brought. But if any should object and say, that Christ indeed doth forbid Promisary Swearing, but it is such onely, as is rash and inconsiderable. To such it is answered, That rash and inconsiderable Swearing and Vowing, was disapproved by them of Old Time, as well as vain and false Swearing, and may be summed up in the number of the rest of Swearings that are forbidden, and were spoken against by them of Old Time, *Eccles. 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Jer. 23. 10. Hosea 4. 2. Zech. 5. 3, 4.* But further, either (Christ forbids in saying, *Swear not at all, Mat. 5. 34. and James 5. 12. Above all things my brethren Swear not, &c.*) all manner of kind of Swearing, of what sort soever, or else he forbids all of one kind; else what signify these words, *not at all*, the term being universal, and must wholly prohibit, either, as is said, all kind of Swearing, or all of that kind it relates to; and therefore

fore while it can be proved that there is a distinction to be made, by allowance from Christ, between Promisary and Promisary Swearing, its concluded, that Christ forbids all Swearing of that kind, to wit, Promisary ; And therefore they cannot take the Oath of Allegiance.

*Second Reason is, Because they are Christ's liege People, He is their King, Isa. 33. 22. Rev. 15. 4. King of Nations, Jer. 10. 7. Psal. 47. 1, 2, 3. And King of kings, 1 Tim. 6. 15. Rev. 19. 16. They stand bound, and engaged to Christ, to serve, obey, and glorifie him, to own and submit to his Lawes and Commands, and not mans Traditions ; for he hath in his rich and free Love to them, given himself for them, that he might purchase and buy them with the price of his precious blood, to the end he might be Lord and King over them, Rom. 14. 9. And that they should serve Him and not men, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Chap. 7. 23. Now if they take the Oath of Allegiance, they become bound to obey the King in what he Commands them, whether his Commands agree with Christ's or no. For if they Swear, they must perform, Num. 30. 2. If it be Objected, *That, that doth not follow.* It's Answered, *It will appear in the ensuing Reasons.**

Thirdly, Because he that takes the Oath of Allegiance, swears and binds his Soul (though not expressly, yet implicitly) to obey the King in whatsoever he Commands them to do, in things Spiritual as well as Temporal, for he is sworn to obey the King indefinitely ; for by the Oath he hath no dispensation to refuse obedience to any Command of the King whatsoever.

Be not deceived, the Oath excepts nor excludes no one Command, of what nature or kind soever it be ; but as is above-said, they that Swear, Swear indefinitely, *That they will bear Faith and true Obedience to the King :* The King Commands Obedience to him, according to his Laws, which he is sworn to maintain ; his Laws they Command in things Spiritual as well as otherwise, as might abundantly be shewed ; And therefore they cannot take the Oath of Allegiance.

Fourthly, Because he that Swears Obedience to the King, must be forsworn if he afterwards frequent Meetings.

ings as formerly; to Serve and Worship God according to the Command of the Spirit, *Heb. 10. 25.* and come not to Common Prayer; for the King hath forbid the one, and the Law Commands the other. Now the plain truth is, they cannot own Common Prayer, nor the Lordly Bishops, come Life come Death; nor none of their Rubbish whatsoever; Because they are not the Ministers of Christ, nor their Wayes the Wayes of Christ, but their own humane Inventions and Traditions. For where was such a thing appointed by Christ, or practised by his Ministers in the Primitive times, as Common Prayer, which is full of *Babbling and vain Repetitions*? contrary to *Mat. 7. 7.* The Apostle Paul saith, *What is it then, I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with Understanding also: I will Sing with the Spirit, and I will Sing with the Understanding also,* 1 *Cor. 14. 15.* But who among them can be said to Pray with the Spirit, that Pray out of the *English Mas Book*? and that hears them sing Prick-Song, like Fiddlers in their Fantastick garb of white Frocks, or Surplices; their Hoods and Tippetts, and such like Fopperies; their Organs, Sackbuts, Cornets, Houboys, and such like; more like the Worship that *Nebuchadnezzar* commanded the *Three Children*, *Dan. 3. 14, 15.* than any Christ commanded under, or in the time of the Gospel: Therefore they cannot take the Oath of Allegiance.

Fifthly, Because he that Swears Allegiance, is Sworn to maintain the Kings Dignity to the utmost of his power. By which it is evident, that the Oath cannot be kept in yeelding (as some say they are onely bound to) passive Obedience, but he must also maintain the Kings Dignities, saith the Oath, now the Dignity of the King, is not onely to be Supream in point of things Temporal, but in things Spiritual also; the meaning is, that the Law gives him that dignity, to be Supream in Spiritual things and causes, as well as Temporal. See the Oath of Supremacy, in a Statute, Intituled, *An Act for Restoring to the Crown the ancient Jurisdiction*; Made in the first Year of Queen Elizabeth; Some part of which Act, for better satisfaction, is inserted, as followeth:

*And that also it may please your Highness, that it may be established and Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that such Jurisdic-
tions,*

dilctions, Priviledges, Superiorities, and Prebeminencies Spiritual or Ecclesiastical, as by any Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Power or Authority hath heretofore been, or lawfully may be exercised or used, for the visitation of the Ecclesiastical State and Persons, and for Reformation, Order and Correction of the same, and of all manner of Errors, Heresies, Schismes, Abuses, Offences, Contempts and Enormities, shall for ever by the Authority of this present Parliament, be united and annexed to the Imperial Crown of this Realm, &c.

See also a Statute, *Anno*, 1. *Ed.* 6. *Cap.* 12. Let the Reader take notice, that these things are not cited or said, to shew that not the King, but the Pope, or some man else is Supream Head of the Church, for such a thing is abhorred by them, they utterly dis-claiming and dis-owning any Power or Authority the Pope hath, and would rejoyce to see the utter desolation of him and all that Hierarchy. They knowing that no man living upon the Earth hath that dignity; but it is Christs, to whom *All Power in Heaven and in Earth is committed*, by the Father, *Mat.* 28, 18. Whence then it's clear, That he that Swears, is not onely bound by Oath, to yeeld actual Obedience to the Kings Commands, in falling in with Common Prayer, &c. as above; but he is bound by Oath, with a Sword in his hand to maintain his Dignity in point of Spirituals, as well as any other, against all attempts made against it; Therefore they cannot take the Oath of Allegiance.

Sixthly, Because he that Swears, is ignorant of what he binds his Soul to, which to do is sin, *Lev.* 5. 4, 5. *If a Soul Swear, pronouncing with his Lips, to do evil or to do good, whatsoever it be, that a man shall pronounce with an Oath, and it be hid from him, when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these; and it shall be when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing.* Now, that whosoever takes the Oath of Obedience, must be ignorant of what he binds his Soul to, is evident; because, he binds his Soul not onely to the King in being, to whom he Swears Allegiance, but to his Successors also: And if it were possible for a man to know, what the King now in being would command in all points: yet it is impossible to know what his Successors may; For

For were the present King *a man after God's own heart*, as *David* was ; yet who knowes but he that succeeds him may introduce Popery, as *Queen Mary*, who succeeded *Edward* the sixth, did? Now he that takes the Oath, binds his Soul to obey those that shall succeed whether Papist or Pagan, as much as the King that is in present being ; Therefore they cannot take the Oath of Allegiance.

Seventhly, Because they cannot Swear upon the true Faith of a Christian, as they are enjoined in the Oath to do. For as much as in part or in whole they are ignorant, if not at present, yet for the future, what it is they are bound by Oath to.

Eighthly, Because, he that takes the Oath of Allegiance, must Swear by the true Faith of a Christian ; now to Swear by the Faith of a Christian, is to Swear by something that is not God, contrary to *Jer. 4. 2.* and *James 5. 12.* Therefore they cannot take the Oath of Allegiance.

Ninthly, Because, they that take the Oath, must Swear they take it heartily, willingly and truly ; which no man can do except he have great clearness in himself by undeniable testimony from the Word of Life, that the things he Swears to perform, are uncontroversably his Liberty, if not his Duty.

Tenthly, Because, God expressly Commandeth him that will Swear and bind his Soul by an Oath, to *Swear in Truth, Righteousness and in Judgement*, *Jer. 4. 2.* which no man can do, if ignorant as above said.

These are their Reasons, or at least some of them ; besides all which, they are in doubt in other things relating to the Oath ; In order unto which, for satisfaction, they propound these *Queries* following ;

First.

Whether all such that Swear Allegiance, who have been Actors in the late War, in Person, Estate, or otherwise ; do not Build again the things they Destroyed? and whether so to do be no Sin?

Secondly.

Whether all such as have Sworn, or shall Swear Allegiance,

giance, who assisted the Parliament in the War, either in Person or Estate, do not openly proclaim themselves, and acknowledge upon Oath to the World, that they are Traitors, Thieves, and Murtherers.

Thirdly.

Whether all such as have Sworn, or shall Swear, who have set days apart, either in publick or in private, to Fast and Pray for the good Success of the Parliament; do not manifest themselves to be notorious Dissemblers, and God-Mockers.

Fourthly.

Whether such who shall Swear, as abovesaid, who have kept days of Thanks-giving, (when any Victory hath been obtained) to praise the Lord for his wonderful goodness, and to speak of the might of his terrible Acts; do not by Swearing, openly throw dirt in the face of God, and conclude that to be of the Devil, that they then said was the glorious Honour of his Majesty, and his wonderous Works?

Fifthly.

Whether a man, though he make a hundred Exceptions if possible, against some things in the Oath, and leave be given him so to do, and he take it after the Exceptions be made; doth not Swear (notwithstanding his Exceptions) according to the plain and expresse Letter of it, and so make void his former Exceptions? forasmuch as he Swears according to these expresse words, (viz.) And all these things, I do plainly and sincerely acknowledge and Swear, according to these expresse words by me spoken, and according to the plain and common fence and understanding of the same words, without equivocation, or mental evasion, or secret reservation whatsoever.

Thus may all men see, that these men do not lie in Prison out of any self-willedness (as some wickedly say they do) but meerly upon the account of Christ, and a good Conscience, which they dare not violate or make shipwrack of, in following the steps of others ; neither dare they engage in any thing dishonourable to Christ their King, which they conceive Swearing Allegiance to any man upon the Earth will be ; their refusing the Oath, is not without ground : Their Reasons are prevailing to them, and may be to others, did they duly weigh and consider them : if any can take them off by the word of Truth, and right Reason, they will do God service, and them also, in being instrumental to open the Prison doors ; for were they satisfied, then would they Swear, and obtain their Liberty, and acknowledge their mistake, as I am truly and well perswaded of them ; but till then, their Conscience and the Honour of Christ (who is precious to them) is more than stone-Walls, iron Grates, Locks and Bolts, to hold them, and therefore let not their Persecutors think to escape the dreadfull Judgements of God if they repent not of their wickedness, and hard speeches that they have ungodlily spoken against them ; For in touching them that fear the Lord (and an Oath) they touch the apple of Gods eye, *Zech. 2. 8. He reproveth Kings for their sake ; saying, touch not mine Anointed, nor do my Prophets no harm,* Psal. 105. 14, 15. The Lord will one day arise and have mercy upon Sion ; so the Heathen shall fear the Name of the Lord, and all the Kings of the Earth thy glory, Psal. 102. 14, 15. For he hath looked down from the height of his Sanctuary, from Heaven did the Lord behold the Earth, to hear the groaning of the Prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death, *Verf. 19, 20. The humble shall see this and be glad, your heart shall live that seek God, for the Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not his Prisoners,* Pl. 69. 32, 33. Oh happy men are they that thus suffer reproach and bonds for the Name of Christ, *1 Pet. 4. 14. Yea, Blessed are they, when men revile them, and persecute them, and shall say all manner of evil of them, falsely, for his sake,* Mat. 5. 11. as that they are Phanaticks or Mad-men, for so said they of Christ, *John 10. 20. And many of them said, he hath a Devil, and is mad, why hear ye him ?* That they have turned the World upside-down, and

and do things contrary to the Decrees of the King ; saying, that *there is another King, one Jesus*. So said those wicked Persecutors of Gods People of Old, *Act. 17. 6, 7*. That they are *Pestilent fellows, and movers of Sedition* ; So said *Tertullus* the Orator, of *Paul*, *Acts 24. 5*. That they are Hereticks, Schismaticks, and what not, as saith the Pope, and *Englands* Lordly Bishops.

Well, notwithstanding let them *rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is their reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets, Christ, and his Servants, that were before them*, *Mat. 5. 12*. It being an evident token of *Perdition* to their adversaries, but of *Salvation* to them, and that of God, *Phil. 1. 28*. Let them therefore be encouraged to stand fast, and keep their integrity, and not touch with any of the filthy Abominations of the times to obtain their Liberty : God will one day make up all their losses, and sufficiently repair them. *For if they suffer with Christ, they shall reign with him*, *2 Tim. 2. 12*. Walk not then, ye Prisoners of Hope, nor ye Saints at Liberty, in the way of this People ; Say ye not a Confederacy to all them, to whom this People shall say a Confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid ; but sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread ; and he shall be for a Sanctuary, *Isa. 8. 11, 12, 13*. Be ye waiting upon the Lord, until the day that he rise up to the Prey, for his determination is to gather the Nations, that he may assemble the Kingdoms, to poure upon them his indignation, even all his fierce anger ; For all the Earth shall be devoured with the fire of his Jealousie : for then will he turn to the People of pure Language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent, *Zeph. 3. 8, 9*. Wait (I say) on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee, to inherit the Land, when the wicked are cut off ; Thou shalt see it, *Psal. 37. 34*.

T H E E N D.